

News Release



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Contact: Joe Rosato
(916) 324-1576
jrosa@parks.ca.gov

January 25 Workshop in Sacramento

Public Input Sought for Off-Highway Vehicle Grant Program

SACRAMENTO – Members of the public are invited to the first annual public workshop examining issues and developing priorities for the new year for California's off-highway vehicle recreation program, California State Parks announced today.

The workshop is being held Saturday, January 25, in Sacramento by California State Parks and the Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Commission as set forth by new legislation designed to expand public input into OHV operations in California.

Topics for the workshop may include safety education, noise reduction requirements, winter recreation, non-motorized recreation and OHV law enforcement.

Millions of Californians enjoy some form of OHV activity and annually generate more than \$3 billion for the state's economy from their participation in this increasingly popular sport. Their registration fees and gas taxes help pay for trail development and maintenance, as well as environmental projects and conservation in the state.

The first of the new annual public workshops will be held Saturday, January 25, from 9:30 a.m. until 4 p.m. at the Holiday Inn Capitol Plaza, 300 J Street, Sacramento, California.

The annual public workshop is provided for in legislation that took effect January 1, 2003, making a number of changes in the state's Off-Highway Vehicle program.

Each year California State Parks and its Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Program administer millions of dollars in grant funds to local government agencies, federal agencies, and non-profit organizations. These grants provide for recreation, wildlife and habitat protection, natural resource conservation and restoration, and law enforcement activities associated with the use of off-highway motor vehicles.

Through its Stakeholders Roundtable and other forums, California State Parks has demonstrated the many positive accomplishments that can be achieved through meaningful and open dialogue with its grant recipients, special interest organizations, and the general public.

The workshop itself will include a brief presentation on recent legislation affecting the OHV Grants Program, short presentations from key stakeholder representatives and a facilitated and interactive discussion among participants to focus on program opportunities, priorities and suggested improvements. After the workshop, the Commission will provide guidance to the Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation (OHMVR) Division regarding the needs, interests, and general priorities identified throughout the day.

The public will be able to make comments at this workshop. Participants are encouraged to provide those comments in writing at or prior to the workshop. **Advance written input must be received prior to January 22**, and can be mailed to:

**Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Commission
California Department of Parks and Recreation
Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Division
P.O. Box 942896
Sacramento, CA 94296-0001**

The morning session will be dedicated to hearing staff and stakeholder presentations on grant program opportunities, priorities and improvements. The afternoon session will be designed to provide a more interactive environment for discussion and information sharing that builds upon the morning session. Depending upon the number of participants, a facilitated roundtable discussion may take place. Alternatively, listening stations may be set up where participants can make their feelings known. In either case, staff, commissioners and stakeholders will be available to discuss and take public comments on many topics.

Some of the topics may include:

- OHV law enforcement
- Reducing and/or enforcing OHV noise
- Natural resource protection, conservation, and restoration
- Safety education
- Grants to non-profit organizations
- Winter recreation
- Local urban off-highway vehicle recreation opportunities
- Non-motorized recreation
- The future of the OHV program

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